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New measures introduced for non-medical masks or face coverings in the Canadian transportation system

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News release

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Ottawa

Transport Canada

COVID-19 is a global public health challenge that has changed the daily lives of people around the world, and ensuring the safety and security of Canadians remains the Government of Canada's top priority.

Today, the Minister of Transport, the Honourable Marc Garneau, announced new measures requiring all air passengers to have a non-medical mask or face covering to cover their mouth and nose during travel. These measures come into effect at noon EDT on April 20, 2020.

When travelling by air, travellers will be asked to cover their mouth and nose:

- at Canadian airport screening checkpoints, where the screeners cannot always keep two metres of separation between themselves and the traveller;
- when they cannot physically distance from others, or as directed by the airline employees; and
- when directed to do so by a public health order or public health official.

Aviation passengers on all flights departing or arriving at Canadian airports will also be required to demonstrate they have the necessary non-medical mask or face covering during the boarding process otherwise they will not be allowed to continue on their journey. Passengers should follow the current Public Health Agency of Canada's guidance on face coverings.

When travelling by marine modes of transportation, travellers are encouraged to wear non-medical masks or face coverings whenever possible. In addition, operators of ferries and essential passenger vessels will, when feasible:

- provide public messaging to travellers about the need to have a non-medical mask or face covering to cover their mouth and nose during their journey when they cannot maintain physical distance from others, and that passengers could be subject to denial of boarding should they fail to comply.

Passengers travelling by rail or motor carrier/bus modes of transportation are also strongly encouraged to wear non-medical masks or face coverings as much as possible. Passengers may be asked by the transportation operator to cover their noses and mouths when physical distancing is not possible.

Quotes

“Canadians should continue to follow public health advice and stay at home if possible. However, if you need to travel, wearing a face covering is an additional measure you can take to protect others around you, especially in situations where physical distancing guidelines cannot be maintained. Transport Canada will continue to ensure various transportation systems adapt to the most effective, preventive measures to protect Canadians.”

Minister of Transport

The Honourable Marc Garneau

Quick facts

- Wearing a non-medical mask or face covering over the mouth and nose is another way to prevent your respiratory droplets from contaminating others or landing on surfaces.
- Existing public health and good hygiene practices including physical distancing and frequent hand washing, are still the most effective methods to limit the spread of the virus.

Associated links

- [Backgrounder on the use of non-medical masks or face coverings in the Canadian transportation system](#)
- [COVID-19 measures, updates, and guidance issued by Transport Canada](#)
- [Poster on Face covering requirements for air travellers](#)

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